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BCStats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 09-02 January 16th, 2009

- **BC's ageing population**
- **November new motor vehicle sales down 4.3%**
- **Exports drop 4.3% in November**

Population

- **BC's population continues to get older, with the median age reaching 40.5 years as of July 1, 2008, representing a 1.6 year increase over the last five years and a 12.7 year increase since 1971.** BC is currently the oldest of the western provinces, largely due to an influx of younger migrants into other provinces over the last few years.

Seniors (those aged 65 and over) account for 14.5% of BC's population, up from 13.6% in 2003. Among the western provinces, only in Saskatchewan do seniors constitute a greater proportion of the population, at nearly 15%. Meanwhile, those aged 18-64 comprise two-thirds of BC's population, and 0 to 17 year olds make up the remainder (19.5%). By 2036, BC Stats' current projection expects this age group to drop to less than 16% of the population.

Nationally, the median age of the population has risen from 38 in 2003 to 39.4 as of July 1, 2008. Currently, seniors account for about 13.5% of the Canadian population.

Data Source: BC Stats

The Economy

- **The value of BC exports slipped 4.3% (*seasonally adjusted*) in November of last year, the most significant month-over-month decline since March.** Exports to the US were down 3.6%, ending two months of gains. The decrease in US-bound exports was fuelled in part by a substantial downturn in shipments of industrial & consumer products (-12.9%), but exports of forestry (-1.2%), energy (-2.2%) and agriculture & fishing (-3.2%) products were also off. Shipments to other countries continued to see-saw (-4.9%, following a 6.4% increase in October), with double-digit losses in two of the five major commodity groups.

Canadian exports (-6.8%) fell for the fourth consecutive month in November as most principal commodity groups posted decreases, most notably energy products (-19.4%). Shipments to the US (-7.4%) and the European Union (-18.5%) were off, while exports to Japan (+3.6%) showed more promise.

Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

- **Sales of new motor vehicles in BC (including the territories) dropped 4.3% (*seasonally adjusted*) in November, mostly due to lower sales of passenger cars (-6.8%).** North American car sales (-9.2%) reached their lowest level since October 1998. Sales of cars built overseas were also off (-3.4%). New truck sales dipped slightly (-0.6%), a result of stalled sales of domestically-built trucks (+0.3%) and weaker sales of overseas-built trucks (-5.8%).

New motor vehicle sales dropped 7.0% nationally in November, with lower sales recorded in nine provinces. Newfoundland & Labrador (-19.8%), Quebec (-11.7%) and New Brunswick (-11.2%) all registered double-digit decreases in sales. Meanwhile, sales were up slightly (+1.8%) in PEI.

Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

- **Relative to the same month of 2007, the cost of new housing in BC's two largest cities continued to decline in November.** Home builders in Vancouver received 2.3% less for their projects, and Victoria's housing price index

Report Tourism Focus: Mainland/Southwest Region

Did you know...
One in five (19%) Canadians visit their doctor less frequently because of information they find on the Internet. *Source: Ipsos Canada*

was also down (-2.4%). Both metropolitan areas saw relatively stable land values (+0.1% in Victoria and +0.9% in Vancouver), but this was not enough to offset declining new housing prices (-3.9% and -4.4%, respectively).

Nationally, the new housing price index inched up 0.7% during the twelve-month period ending in November. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **BC investment in non-residential construction inched 1.0% higher *(seasonally adjusted)* to $1.36 billion in current dollars in the fourth quarter of 2008.** The increase was mainly the result of a 2.8% rise in commercial construction as investors reduced their spending on both industrial (-9.3%) and institutional (-0.4%) construction projects.
Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Sawmills and planing mills in the province produced 15.0% less lumber this October than in the same month last year.** Mills in the Interior slowed their output substantially (-17.1%), but production at coastal mills was up (+11.1%). Outside of BC, Canadian production was also down (-15.3%), as volume was off in most lumber-producing provinces.
Data Source: Statistics Canada

Tourism

- **BC room revenues continued to trend downward in September (-2.8%, seasonally adjusted).** An increase (+5.2%) in Northeast was offset by declines in Vancouver Island/Coast (-1.9%), Nechako (-2.0%), Cariboo (-2.4%), Thompson/Okanagan (-2.4%), Kootenay (-2.5%), North Coast (-2.6%), and Mainland/Southwest (-3.8%). Revenues at all types of accommodation slipped in September, including hotels (-3.3%), motels (-1.2%) and other types of accommodation (-4.0%), such as vacation rentals, fishing lodges, and bed-and-breakfasts. *Data Source: BC Stats*

- **Tourism spending in Canada fell 0.7% in the third quarter of last year, marking the first decline in five years.** The decrease was driven mostly by non-resident tourism demand (-2.1%) but tourism spending by Canadians also edged down (-0.4%).
Data Source: Statistics Canada

The Nation

- **Canadian manufacturers' prices were 5.9% higher in November 2008 than in the same month of 2007.** This marked the eighth straight year-over-year increase, albeit a slowdown from October's growth rate (+9.9%). Double-digit increases in the prices of motor vehicles (+17.3%), chemicals (+13.7%) and pulp & paper products (+16.9%) were mitigated by declines for petroleum & coal products (-10.4%) and primary metals (-4.1%). The sharp downturn in prices for petroleum & coal products ended 14 consecutive increases. Despite such slowdowns, the depreciation of the Canadian dollar helped sustain the year-over-year increase in producer prices. Indeed, without the exchange rate effect, the IPPI would have declined 1.5% instead of increasing 5.9%.

BC softwood lumber prices climbed (+11.6%) as producers of Interior (+15.1%) lumber received substantially more for their products. Prices for Coastal lumber (+5.0%) were also up, although less notably so. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

The World

- **The US Consumer Price Index (seasonally adjusted) continued to decline in December (-0.7%) for the third consecutive month.** The downward trend is largely driven by gasoline prices, which accounted for 90% of the monthly decline. Overall, the CPI was only 0.1% higher in December 2008 than the same month of 2007. *Data Source: US Department of Labor*

The unemployment rate in the US increased from 6.8% to 7.2% in December as non-farm payroll employment contracted by 524,000. Job losses were particularly deep in construction, manufacturing, and professional and business service industries.
Data Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

***Infoline** Issue: 09-02*
January 16th, 2009

For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

Infoline Report

Contact: Hayley Cavallin
250 387-4295
Originally published in
Tourism Sector Monitor Issue 08-11

Tourism Focus: Mainland/Southwest Region

Introduction

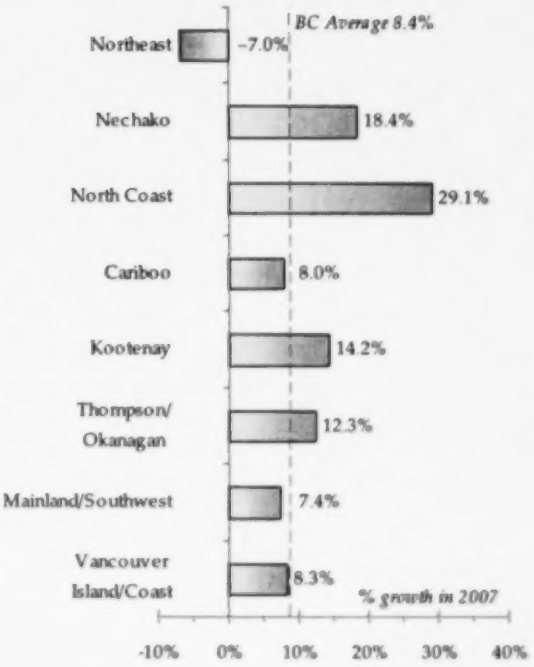
Mainland/Southwest is by far the most visited region in British Columbia. With a wide array of cultural and scenic, indoor and outdoor activities, the region attracts travellers from around the world. Mainland/Southwest is comprised of four regional districts—Greater Vancouver (GVRD), Fraser Valley, Squamish-Lillooet, and Sunshine Coast—each of which provides a unique experience for its visitors. Internationally, the region has become increasingly prominent since 2003, at which time the City of Vancouver was declared host of the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Room Revenues

Mainland/Southwest ranks first among development regions in BC in terms of room revenues. In 2007, the region contributed just over $1 billion in room receipts, over half (53%) of the provincial total. Greater Vancouver alone accounted for nearly 40% of room revenues in BC.

Room revenues in the region were up 7.4% in 2007, slightly less than the annual provincial average (+8.4%). The region was outpaced by all other development regions with the exception of Northeast (-7.0%). Accommodation receipts expanded most in North Coast (+29.0%), Nechako (+18.4%), Kootenay (+14.2%) and Thompson Okanagan (+12.3%) in 2007.

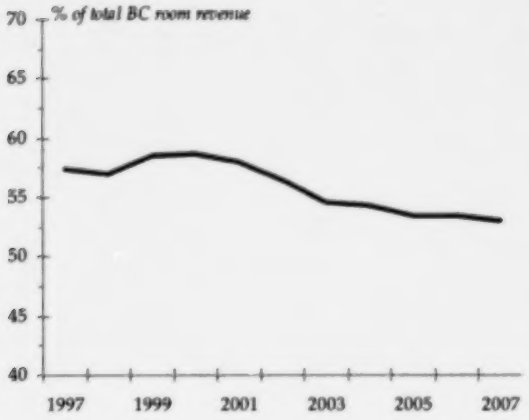
Revenue growth second lowest in Mainland/Southwest in 2007



Data Source: BC Stats

While it is indisputable that Mainland/Southwest is a vital contributor to tourism in BC, over the past decade, accommodation receipts in the region (+56.8%) have lagged behind average provincial growth (+70.0%). Consequently, the region's share of provincial room revenue has been declining since 2000.

Mainland/Southwest share of provincial room revenue is falling



Data Source: BC Stats

Accommodation types in the region

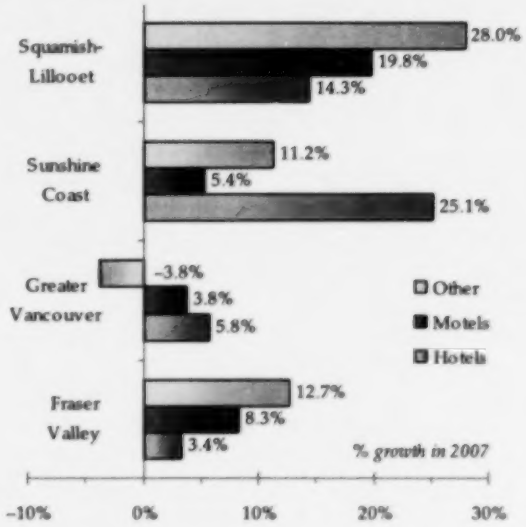
In 2007, over 400 properties operated in Mainland/Southwest, down slightly (-3.8%) from 2006. Although hotels made up just over half (54%) of all properties, they accounted for over 90% of total accommodation room receipts in 2007. The proportion of room revenues earned at hotels was highest in Greater Vancouver (95%), followed by Squamish-Lillooet (84%), Fraser Valley (70%), and Sunshine Coast (44%).

Hotel room revenues grew 7.2% in 2007, slightly less than total room revenues for the region (+7.4%). While revenues at hotels in Sunshine Coast (+25.1%) and Squamish-Lillooet (+14.4%) shot up, hotels in Fraser Valley (+3.4%) and Greater Vancouver (+5.8%) experienced below-average growth.

In 2007, one-fifth of all properties in Mainland/Southwest were motels, although they earned only 3.4% of accommodation room revenues. This is probably because motels tend to be smaller and less expensive than other types of accommodation, such as hotels. Motels, whose relative share of room revenues has slipped over the past decade, grew 6.0% in 2007, mostly due to a surge (+19.8%) in Squamish-Lillooet.

Other types of accommodation, which include fishing lodges, bed-and-breakfasts (B&Bs), guide outfitters, and campgrounds made up about one-quarter (26%) of all accommodation properties in 2007, while they accounted for only 5.7% of room revenues. Revenue growth was 12.7% in 2007, and was most substantial in Squamish-Lillooet (+28.0%).

Hotels in Sunshine Coast and other accommodations in Squamish-Lillooet boomed in 2007

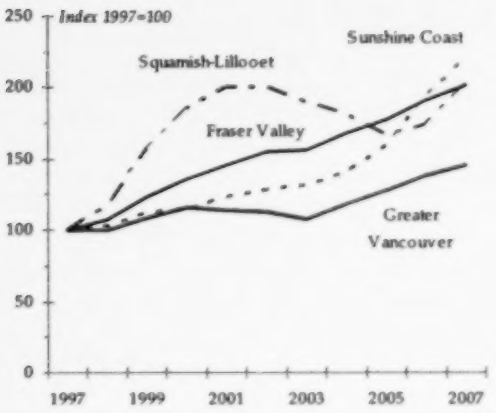


Data Source: BC Stats

Regional districts in Mainland/Southwest

Since 1997, room revenue growth within Mainland/Southwest has varied substantially. While all regional districts experienced growth in 2007, some posted much stronger gains than others.

Squamish-Lillooet and Sunshine Coast posted strong room revenue growth in 2007



Data Source: BC Stats

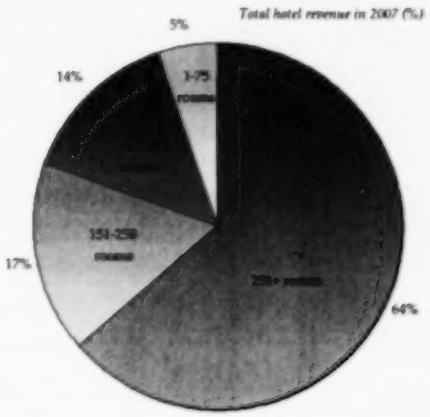
Greater Vancouver

The GVRD is the most populated regional district in BC, and is by far the most visited. With many popular attractions such as Downtown Vancouver and Capilano Suspension Bridge, in addition to being a common business travel destination, the regional district accounted for 75% of Mainland/ Southwest room revenues in 2007. In 2007, room revenues for the district totalled $783.8 million, up 5.4% from 2006. However, growth (+45.9%) over the past decade has lagged behind the regional average.

Downtown Vancouver attracts visitors seeking the many conveniences and amenities that city living has to offer. Over $474.9 million in accommodation receipts was earned in 2007, of which almost all (99%) originated at hotels. The dominance of hotels in total revenues reflects the fact that motels and other accommodations are usually located outside a downtown core.

Most (64%) Downtown Vancouver hotel room revenue came from very large (251+ rooms) hotels. Large (17%, 151-250 rooms), medium-sized (14%, 76-150 rooms) and small (5%, 1-75 rooms) hotels accounted for a smaller share of revenues.

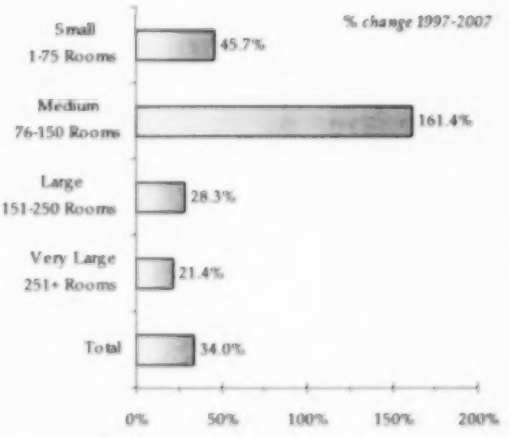
Very large hotels earn most in Downtown Vancouver...



Data Source: BC Stats

While very large hotels remain the accommodation of choice in Vancouver, revenue growth has been slower than that at smaller hotels. Over the past decade, while medium-sized hotel room revenue has increased 161.4%, very large hotel receipts have gone up only 21.4%.

...but medium-sized hotel revenues are growing much faster



Data Source BC Stats

Fraser Valley

Located east of Vancouver, visitors can reach the Fraser Valley via the Trans Canada Highway. Tracing the Fraser River, the region offers adventurous boating and rafting opportunities, and is also home to many parks and conservation areas. In 2007, the region contributed $46.6 million in room revenues, up 5.2% from 2006. This was the slowest annual growth in the regional district in over a decade. Since 1997, overall room revenues have expanded 101.1%.

Squamish-Lillooet

The Squamish-Lillooet regional district includes the municipalities of Lillooet, Pemberton, Squamish and Whistler. Recently, the regional economic base has become increasingly dependent on tourism. This trend will likely continue as the upcoming Olympics broaden the international tourism profile of the region.

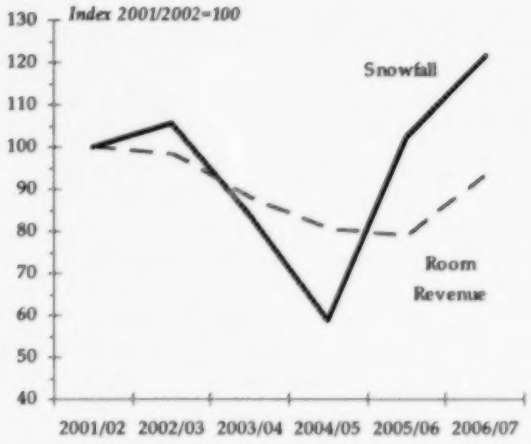
Since 1997, Squamish-Lillooet room receipts have shot up 102.3%. After dropping between 2002 and 2005, accommodation room revenues surged in 2007 (+16.3%), far surpassing the regional average. By 2007, room revenues for the region totalled $206.2 million, exceeding their former peak in 2002.

Whistler is one of the most popular ski destinations in British Columbia. The resort town is accessible from West Vancouver via the scenic Sea-to-Sky Highway, which is currently undergoing major upgrades in preparation for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. Room revenues in Whistler make up about 95% of the Squamish-Lillooet total.

In 2007, Whistler total accommodation revenue increased 16.0%, the highest annual growth since 2000. The jump was mostly due to a surge (+27.6%) in revenues at other accommodation types, such as B&Bs, vacation rentals, and campgrounds. Vacation rentals, which include establishments that provide temporary or longer-term accommodation, accounted for 13% of total Whistler room revenues in 2007, com-pared to a regional average of 4%.

Since Whistler is most renowned as a ski destination, its tourism industry is highly dependent on weather conditions. Three quarters of room revenues in 2007 occurred during the seven months that make up a typical ski season (November-May). Over the 2006/2007 season, snowfall at Whistler Blackcomb Mountains totalled 1,416 cm1, the highest in at least five years. Therefore, it is not surprising that visitors flocked to the urban centre the same season.

Whistler room revenues rose with average snowfall during 2006/2007 ski season



Data Source: Statistics Canada & Whistler Blackcomb website
Data is for November-May only

Sunshine Coast

Named one of the New York Times' "31 Best Places to Go This Summer2," in 2008, the Sunshine Coast is best known for its spec-

[1] Whistler Blackcomb – Weather Stats. www.whistlerblackcomb.com/weather/stats/index.htm. Cited November 27, 2008

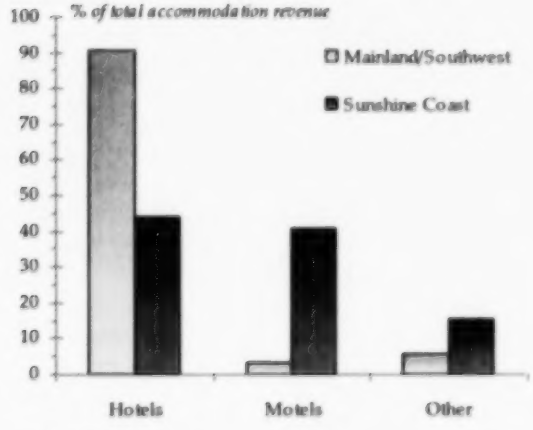
[2] The 31 Places to Go this Summer – Nytimes.com. www.nytimes.com/ref/travel/20080601_SUMMER.html

tacular scenery, which includes its forests, coastal mountain ranges, and sandy beaches. The region is located northwest of Vancouver and includes many is-lands accessible by ferry. Those travelling to the Sunshine Coast are usually attracted to a wide range of outdoor recreation activities the region has to offer such as kayaking, sailing, and mountain biking.

In 2007, room revenues in the Sunshine Coast region grew considerably (+14.2%), largely due to a strong performance at hotels (+25.1%). In the last 10 years, room receipts have shot up 120.1%. By 2007, room revenues totalled $6.6 million, representing only 0.6% of the Mainland/Southwest total.

Despite only moderate room revenue growth (+5.4%) in 2007, motels remain vital to the tour-ism industry in Sunshine Coast, where they contribute 40% of total accommodation receipts. Visitors to the regional district are more likely to stay at motels and other accommodation types rather than hotels, compared to the rest of Mainland/Southwest.

Motels and other accommodations are more popular in Sunshine Coast.



Data Source: BC Stats

Air traffic to the region

The two main airports in Mainland/ Southwest are Vancouver International and Abbotsford International, which together serviced over 18 million passengers in 2007.

Located in Richmond, Vancouver International Airport is the busiest of all airports in BC. The airport saw 17.5 million passengers in 2007, up 3.3% from 2006. Most (51%) travelled domestically, followed by those travelling from the US (25%), Asia/Pacific (14%), Europe (7%), and other international locations (2%).

After receiving substantial expansions in 2005, Abbotsford International Airport, located in the Fraser Valley, experienced a boost in passenger volume of 27.9% in 2006.

Conclusion

Room revenue growth within the Mainland/Southwest Region varied considerably in 2007, both by district and by accommodation type. While room revenues have boomed in the Squamish-Lillooet and Sunshine Coast regional districts, the Greater Vancouver and Fraser Valley regional districts have grown at a slower rate than the provincial average. Overall, room revenues in the Mainland/Southwest region have grown less rapidly than the provincial average. However, with the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games just around the corner, regional tourism will likely flourish, particularly in Vancouver and Whistler.

REGISTRATION FORM:

This information will appear on your ID badge, please print clearly.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

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Method of Payment:

Cheque_____

(Payable to the Receiver General of Canada)

Visa_____ M/C_____ Amex_____

Amount $ (including GST): _____

Cardholder: _____

Card No: _____

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Signature: _____

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FEES:

Early Bird Rate: $199 per person
+ 5% GST ($9.95) = $208.95
(for registrations received by Monday February 2, 2009)

Regular Rate: $249 per person
+ 5% GST ($12.45) = $261.45

Registration fees include continental breakfast, a lunch buffet, and refreshments.

Cancellation policy: Substitutes are permitted; however, no refunds will be given for cancellations.

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or toll free to 1-877-287-4369

EMAIL:
registrar@diversitymattersconference.ca

MAIL: Registrar,
Statistics Canada,
Suite 600, 300 West Georgia Street,
Vancouver, BC, V6B 6C7

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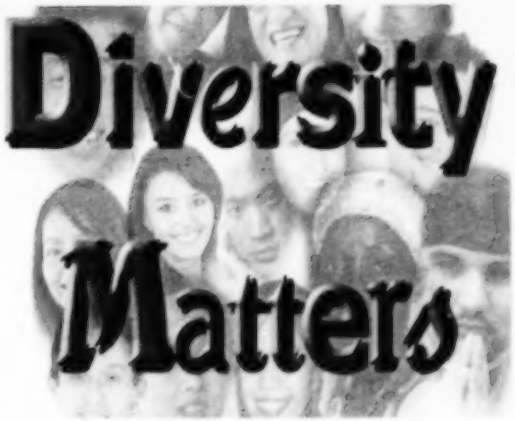

A one-day conference bringing you the latest statistical information on immigration and diversity for Canada, British Columbia, and Metro Vancouver

DATE & VENUE:

Monday February 23, 2009
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Sheraton Wall Centre,
1088 Burrard Street
Vancouver, BC

www.diversitymattersconference.ca

Statistics Canada Statistique Canada

Diversity Matters

Statistics Canada and our conference partners* would like to welcome you to **Diversity Matters**, a one-day conference featuring a panel of experts who will present on the changes, trends and implications of ethno-cultural diversity and immigration at the national, provincial and regional levels.

The conference also includes panel discussions, Q & As, information booths and demonstrations on how to access the wealth of free information available on Statistics Canada's website: www.statcan.gc.ca.

** Conference partners include BC Stats, WelcomeBC, the Government of Canada's Foreign Credential Recognition Program and Multiculturalism Program.*

Why is the conference important?

Good statistics are the foundation of a well-functioning country. They allow businesses, non-profit organizations as well as individual Canadians to make informed decisions, and government of all levels to develop appropriate policies.

Our panel of experts will draw from a wide array of data sources to bring you up-to-date on important information such as:

- 2006 Census highlights on immigration, language, ethnic origin and visible minorities
- Profiles of main ethnic communities
- The changing diversity composition of the population across sub-provincial regions within BC
- Implications of diversity and future projections
- Social, economic and labour market integration of immigrants
- Attracting immigrants to smaller centres

CONFERENCE PARTNERS:

BC Stats
Welcome BC

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS:

Keynote Speaker:

The Honourable Wally Oppal,
B.C. Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism

Presenters:

Anil Arora, Assistant Chief Statistician, Social, Institutions and Labour Statistics Field, Statistics Canada

Tina Chui, Chief, Ethnocultural and Immigration Section, Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division, Statistics Canada

David O'Neil, Director, Population Statistics, BC Stats

Andrew Ramlo, Director, Urban Futures

Professor Dan Hiebert, Co-Director, Metropolis BC, Center of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Diversity

Jean McRae, Executive Director, Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria

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Canada

Infoline

January 16, 2009
Issue 09–02

Email transmission information service from BC Stats

also on the Internet at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Oct 1/08	% change on one year ago
BC	4,405.5	1.6
Canada	33,441.3	1.2
GDP and INCOME (Revised Nov 6)		
(BC - at market prices)	2007	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	192,528	5.4
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	164,583	3.0
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)*	38,184	1.4
Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)*	25,282	3.1
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Oct	3,446	0.4
Merchandise Exports - Nov	2,915	-4.3
Retail Sales - Oct	4,679	-2.0
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - Nov 2008)	one year ago	% change
BC	2.0	2.1
Vancouver	2.3	2.3
Victoria	2.1	1.8
Canada	2.0	2.5
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Dec '08	prev. month
Labour Force - BC	2,433	0.1
Employed - BC	2,303	-0.3
Unemployed - BC	130	9.0
		Nov '08
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	5.3	4.9
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	6.6	6.3
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Jan 14/09	Jan 16/08
Prime Business Rate	3.50	6.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	5.60	7.35
- 5 year	6.75	7.49
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Jan 14/09	Jan 16/08
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.2383	1.0239
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.8011	0.9760
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Dec '08	one year ago
BC	796.71	5.4
Canada	796.28	3.9

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Provincial Electoral District Profiles

We have just completed a series of profiles for each of the 85 electoral districts that will be contested in the provincial general election scheduled for May 12, 2009. Based on the 2006 Census; 27 pages each.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/profiles/peds/ped_06.asp

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www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/rss/rss.asp

The Import Content of Exports: A British Columbia Perspective

A new study examining the import content of British Columbia's exports has been released. The removal of the import content allows for better comparison with GDP and provides insights into the value-added content of exports and the extent that firms are outsourcing production in an attempt to lower costs.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/trade.asp#ICE

Data and Health Mapping Browser

A new thematic mapping tool on our site will display a wide selection of BC Stats' data holdings. For a fee, BC Stats can create similar mapping tools for your organization using your own data for display on our site.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/maps/browsers.asp

Released this week by BC Stats

- Exports, November 2008

Next week

- Consumer Price Index, December 2008

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